

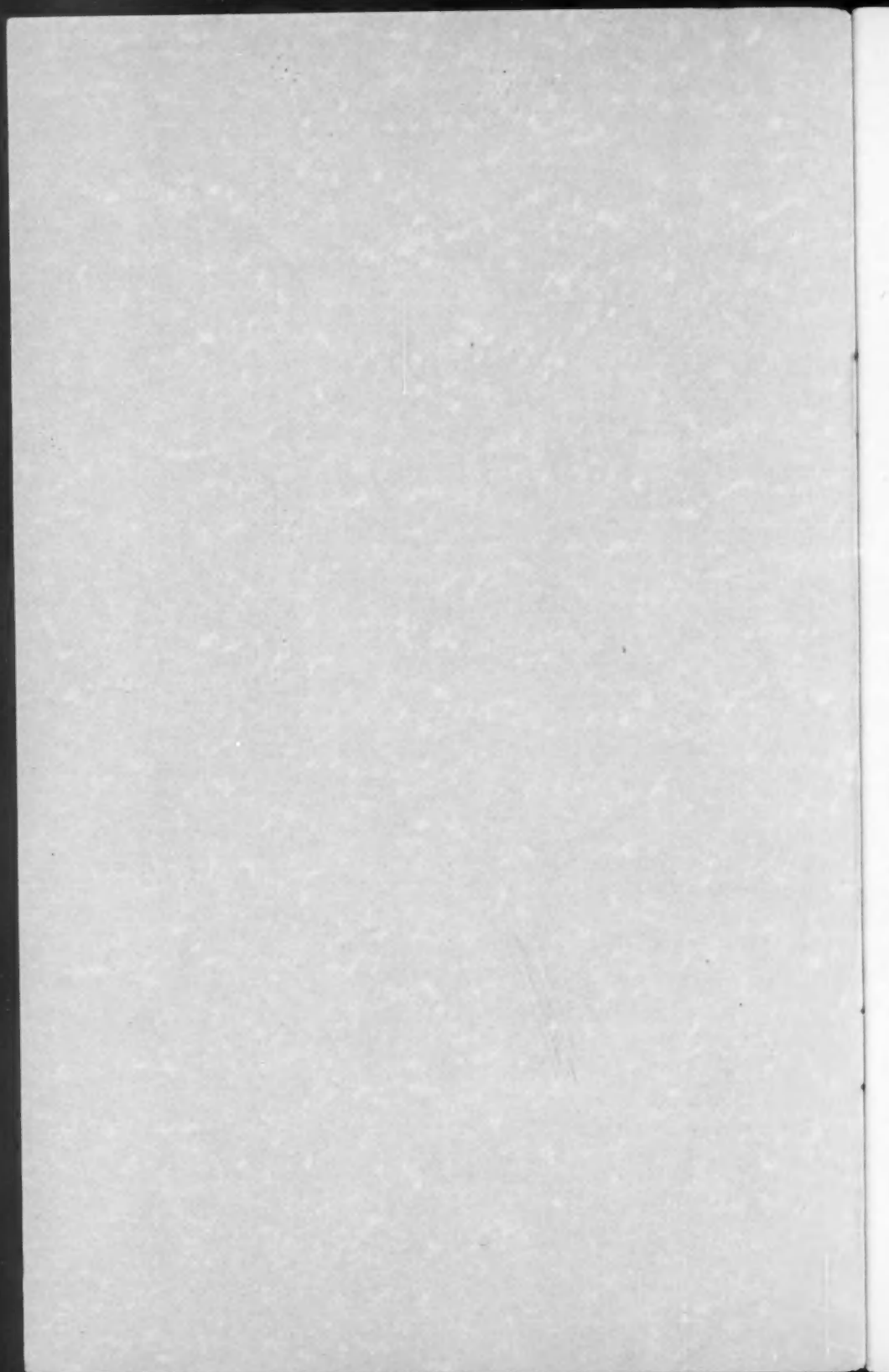
# THE CONSORT

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#### FOREWORD

IN this, the third post-war issue of THE CONSORT, we once again express grateful thanks to our generous contributors:—

To Mabel Dolmetsch, for her Personal Recollections (with contemporary photographs) relating to her late husband's early life, thus giving us glimpses of how the great work began.

To Dr. Henry G. Farmer for his interesting description of the Kidson Collection in Glasgow.

To Carl F. Dolmetsch for his expert advice to would-be recorder players.

To M. Marc Pincherle for permitting us to translate and shorten (for want of space) his account of 18th century Florid Ornamentation.

To the Viola da Gamba Society for allowing us to include a recent communication to this Society on the instruments which make up a chest of viols.

To M. Alfred Cortot for supplying photographs of Michael Dubourg's manuscript in his library.

We pay tribute to John Sebastian Bach, this year of his bi-centenary, and to the clairvoyance of his first biographer, Forkel, who wrote his book at a time when the great master was practically unknown.

THE EDITOR.

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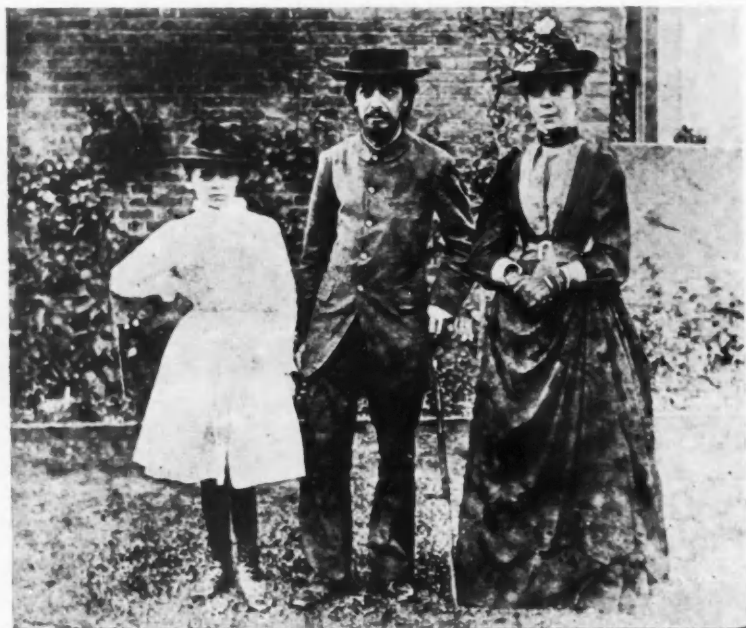
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PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF  
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BY  
MABEL DOLMETSCH

PART I

A QUESTION frequently asked concerning Arnold Dolmetsch was "What is his nationality?" Even a Moroccan Arab, selling knick-knacks in the market-place of Le Mans, bent upon him a piercing regard and asked: "D'où venez-vous?" He answered simply: "Je suis français," to which rejoinder the Arab politely replied, inflating his chest, "Oui, oui! Moi aussi! Drapeau français!" Indeed, Arnold Dolmetsch was a difficult type to place; and various countries in the north, south, east and west of Europe have been at times allotted to him by rumour.

Technically, on the paternal side, he was a Swiss subject and a Burgher of Zürich. His mother's family, however, were natives of Savoie named Guillouard who, early in the 19th century, established themselves in the city of Le Mans as organ builders and repairers and traders in musical instruments in general.

In this ancient town, under the shadow of its great double-towered church (Notre Dame de la Couture), Arnold Dolmetsch was born and reared. His bedroom window looked on to the church towers, and their famous chimes made a deep impression on him; so that all his life he retained a feeling of nostalgia at the recollection of their extraordinary beauty. His strongest sympathies belonged to France, to which country he was passionately attached.

He was surprised one day when Joachim, the violinist, for whom he cherished a warm admiration, said to him: "You know you are not French! You are Hungarian!" He elaborated his theory by explaining that when the Turks over-ran Eastern Europe in the 14th century, they found the need of interpreters between themselves and the conquered peoples. To such the name "Dolmetscher" was applied, this name being derived from a Turkish word signifying to *change*.

There had been a legend in the Dolmetsch family that a remote ancestor had "come from Bohemia"; but no genealogical details were forthcoming in those far-off days. It was in 1945

that we were gratified with the longed-for information. During the war we received several visits from a young American airman, named Carl Richard Dolmetsch, a descendant from a collateral branch of the family. It transpired that his father (also named Carl!) had, before the war, made laborious investigations into the family history. Thus we learned that in the 15th century there had dwelt in Austria a *Philip von Dolmetscher*, who was knighted by the Hapsburgs; and that a 17th century descendant, Zacharius Dolmetsch, living in Stuttgart, was our latest common ancestor. His eldest son (Johann Conrad Ludwig) was a musician and had a son who followed the same profession. This person (Johann David Friedrich) crossed over the Swiss border and settled in Zürich, where he married and had a son named Friedrich. Being of an errant nature, he later returned to Stuttgart, whence in course of time he journeyed to Russia and was heard of no more.

The orphaned Friedrich, aged 12, was adopted by the Swiss composer Egli, who provided him with an excellent musical education. Thus he became one of the leading musicians of Zürich and was made a Burgher of that town. This then was Arnold Dolmetsch's renowned grandfather, who brought up all his children as musicians and taught them to play Bach's Preludes and Fugues on the Clavichord.

His two sons migrated westwards as though obeying a hereditary instinct. The elder, Frédéric, settled finally in Angers and there gained a high reputation as a virtuoso pianist, composer and musical critic. He it was who was sent by the *Figaro* to Cairo, to report upon the first performance of *Aida*.

The younger son, Arnold-Rudolf (an organist) was apprenticed to *Amand Guillaouard*, the organ builder of Le Mans. Within a short time he had wooed and married the eldest daughter, dark-eyed Marie-Zélie Guillaouard, and was eventually promoted to the management of the piano department. He was accountable for the dismemberment of many an old square piano. "For," said he, "what else could one do with them?"

Their eldest son (the Arnold Dolmetsch of the present narrative) was a small and delicate child. It was said that at birth he was too weak to take nourishment, until his grandmother had administered some spoonfuls of choice white wine! She was by way of being a wise woman, skilled in the concoction

of traditional remedies. So the weak baby became an intelligent and precocious boy who, resisting all attempts to make of him a pianist, adopted the violin as his chosen instrument. A violin, considered as of small value, was given to him from the shop. In his later life he recognised the instrument as having been a transformed treble viol!

His first teacher was a gipsy violinist who had obtained an engagement to give popular performances in a local music hall. Having apparently pawned his own violin in a moment of stress, he came to the Dolmetsch music shop to try to borrow one. Arnold-Rudolf, a keen business man, consented to lend a violin to the stranger on condition that he would give free tuition to his young son.

Thus came about the first violin lessons, to the child's evident pleasure, in contrast to the reluctance with which he had submitted to instruction from his piano teacher (a retired Band Master, who had been at the Battle of Waterloo, and was apt to reinforce his admonitions by knuckle rapping). His new professor entertained him with all kinds of tricks and stunt performances, which agreeably enlivened the lessons. But one day, to their surprise, the teacher failed to appear, and enquiries brought about the discovery that both violinist and borrowed violin had vanished.

The next teacher of *le petit Arnold* was his efficient, though less picturesque, Uncle Boblin, a pupil of Delphin Alard, who had married a younger sister of Marie-Zélie. He was a person of fine artistic taste and a philosophic turn of mind, from whom his nephew imbibed not only a sound violin technique, but also some liberal ideas and unorthodox wisdom. Another powerful influence in his young life was his grandfather Guillouard, who showed his affection in many ways, from the new year's gift of a gold ten-franc piece (as against the one-franc bestowed on his younger brothers) to the privilege of accompanying him as his assistant on his periodical circuit of the outlying churches for the purpose of tuning the organs. On these occasions various fine architectural features and interesting examples of carving would be pointed out and explained.

There would be an occasional visit to the august Uncle Frédéric (his father's senior by 17 years). He recalled how during one of these visits he listened to his uncle and two of

his cousins practising a Bach concerto for three harpsichords (on three pianos, naturally). He himself, then aged nine, was allowed to turn over the pages.

Bound up with this period were happy recollections of "le jardin de la grand'mère." This legendary garden, in which grew all manner of fruits and vegetables, was, in fact, the remnant or nucleus of an ancient farm on the outskirts of the town. Its little tumbledown farmhouse was occupied, rent free, by an aged dame who acted as caretaker. Here on fine Sundays the whole family would repair, laden with comestibles for a picnic. Their more than ample meal was eaten in a leafy bower called a *charmille*, formed from a double row of hornbeam trees, so trained that their upper branches met and intertwined to form a dense green roof (from which caterpillars sometimes descended). The site of this paradise is now a populous residential district, alas!

Apart from the distractions of boating, fishing and swimming provided by the River Sarthe, another source of absorbing interest for Arnold arose from his father's workshop. Here he was allowed a free hand, and gradually picked up considerable skill and craftsmanship. There exists in our midst a fair-sized nest of drawers, designed to hold tools, which he constructed at the age of 14. It is made of cedarwood veneered with mahogany; and so faultless is the workmanship that not a thing has altered from that day to this. The drawers slide in and out without a tremor.

The war of 1870 brought its excitements and finally its griefs. One would judge that the local army of those times approximated to the home guard of our last war. In the days of their preliminary training for battle, Arnold (then 12) was allowed to serve as a drummer boy, and was also employed to write out the time-honoured bugle calls: *Le Réveil*, *La Soupe*, etc.

According to his recollections, their outfit and general equipment was by no means first-class. In the final rout which followed the last battle fought around Le Mans, the fleeing soldiers who rushed helter-skelter through the town appeared to him as a ragged horde.

The snow lay thick upon the ground, and as, on the following day, the family filed solemnly out to attend the funeral of



his little sister Nathalie, aged four, who had died of pneumonia, they had to pick their way through dead horses and abandoned equipment.

The unhappy mother was prostrated by the loss of her only daughter, and the whole household was plunged in gloom. The family at Angers also had its share of mourning, since Carl, the eldest son of Uncle Frédéric and a charming and brilliant personality, succumbed soon afterwards to tuberculosis, contracted during the siege of Paris.

The day came when the victors marched through the town to exultant strains of military music, played (as it appeared) by multiple bands, intersecting smart bodies of picked troops. All the inhabitants closed their shutters; but some peeped through, including Arnold-Rudolf and his eldest son. Thus the observant young Arnold discovered that it was but a single band, coming back like a recurring mechanical toy. For he recognised both instruments and players!

German soldiers were quartered on them; these, however, were all decent fellows who, not only were practically no charge upon them, but used to supply them with foreign delicacies gleaned from the officers' canteen. For the old nurse Fanchon (Arnold's devoted ally) they were a standing joke which lasted her the rest of her life. Amand Guillouard, fearing for his wine cellar, had stacked away his choicer wine at one end of the cellar and walled it up. On the day of the departure of their Teutonic guests, he broached the false barrier and drew out some fine old wine to serve them as a stirrup cup. The soldiers smacked their lips and remarked jocularly that, had they realised the existence of the hidden store there would not have remained any of it to toast their departure. They had a pretty way of knocking the top off a bottle.

During the post-war occupation, many conferences took place between the ruling forces (for the nonce) and the civic authorities. Arnold-Rudolf's services were therefore requisitioned in the rôle of interpreter, he being the only inhabitant of Le Mans who could speak German. He had several interviews with the Crown Prince Frederick, who used to visit the shop and whom (despite his own republican principles) he admired as a good and just man. The huge indemnity demanded from

the town struck consternation into the hearts of its thrifty inhabitants, who panicked to a man. The situation was tense until wise Grand-mère Guillouard came forward with a substantial contribution, assuring her fellow citizens that they would all be amply indemnified in due time. And so they were.

It was the women of France, then as now, who controlled the family finances; and Madame Guillouard exercised this function with remarkable perspicacity. She was only once known to make a mistake. This happened when she was offered for a paltry price the historic house where Berengaria of Navarre lived out her saintly life, after her abandonment by Richard Coeur de Lion. She prudently rejected it because of its dilapidated condition! She was astounded when, a year or two later, the town bought it for a large sum on account of its historical value. It is now a museum.

Shortly after the war, Amand Guillouard died; and the organ building industry appears to have lapsed with him. There hangs in our music room a beautifully executed drawing by him of an organ, decorated in the Gothic style. This organ was intended to occupy the west gallery of the church of *Notre Dame de la Couture*. It was never built, however, for lack of funds, and a temporary organ was installed of unsuitable design. It is still there, blocking the west window.

On leaving school (the Lycée du Mans) Arnold was taken into his father's workshop; and for a couple of years father and son were able to work together harmoniously. Suddenly that aftermath of the war, called "Russian influenza," swept through the land. Arnold-Rudolf fell a victim to it. His notebook records on March 7th, 1874, that he is feeling better and intends to get up next day. It was this imprudence which brought on the fatal relapse. Arnold, with his capable mother and his astute grandmother, now carried on the affairs of the *Maison Dolmetsch* between them. Its commercial side, combined with the active promotion of concerts, seems henceforth to have been its mainstay, the old workshop transforming itself into a convenient repair department. It was the musical side of the concern which began to appeal more and more to Arnold. He joined an operatic orchestra, belonged to a local quartet, and now and then took part in chamber concerts. Many notable musicians then lived in Le Mans.

They continued their journey eastwards and settled for a time in Nancy. Here their daughter (who grew up to be the handsome and gifted H  l  ne) was born. Putting the child out to nurse, according to the foolish custom of that time, they made their way to Brussels, in pursuance of a new plan. Arnold

Dolmetsch entered the Conservatoire to complete his musical education, while his wife continued her piano studies under an eminent teacher in the town.

Education in the Brussels Conservatoire was completely free, the pupil's admission depending on his musical ability; and Arnold had the good fortune thus to receive a first-rate training in harmony and counterpoint from Ferdinand Kufferath, for whom he conceived a deep admiration. The attraction was apparently mutual, for Kufferath invited his pupil to spend the holiday recess at his home in Blankenberg on the flat sea coast, there to continue their studies unhindered. The daughter of his host was an expert at shrimp peeling, in which she had acquired an almost incredible skill. He watched her, fascinated; but most of the shrimps found their way down his amiable host's gullet!

As regards the violin, he was placed under Vieuxtemps; but, owing to this artist's poor state of health, much of his work was done under other professors. During the latter part of his course he was numbered among the few students admitted to membership of the teachers' orchestra. Thereby he met many distinguished visiting musicians. The director of the Conservatoire was a friend of Brahms, and many of this composer's works had their first try-out by the teachers' orchestra, whose members were divided between the partisans of Brahms and those of Liszt!

On the completion of his four years' course at Brussels, Arnold moved to England with his wife and young daughter. In order to acquaint himself with English methods of teaching he entered the Royal College of Music in its opening year (1882) as a pupil of Sir Hubert Parry for harmony and Henry Holmes for the violin. At the close of this year he was offered the post of violin master at Dulwich College, which he accepted. The young mathematics master then at the College was A. H. Fox-Strangways, better known since then as a musical critic and writer on Indian music. They became friends.

Despite his strange appearance and foreign accent, Arnold Dolmetsch possessed the gift of inspiring enthusiasm and devotion in his pupils. He soon came to realise that, with only half-an-hour per day at the disposal of each boy for practice, it would be profitless to encumber them with technical exercises.

In place of such he taught them good music, and so trained their ear and musical sensitivity that in a comparatively short time they were able to take part creditably in a concert of music by Purcell. Reporting on this concert, a London critic observed that the music sounded remarkably fresh considering its age.

As may be imagined, there was nothing fortuitous about his choice of the compositions of Henry Purcell. His taste for the music of the late 17th and early 18th centuries had already been formed in his student days, and further stimulated by contact with three musicians at the Conservatoire, Van Wafaelghem, Jakob and Diémer, who (borrowing instruments from the Museum) formed a trio for the performance of 18th century music on the Viola d'amore, Viola da Gamba and Harpsichord. Diémer had a delicate keyboard technique which facilitated his acquisition of a fine harpsichord touch; and the other two possessed both charm and warmth of tone, although Jakob played his viola da gamba 'cello-wise and Van Wafaelghem was using the viola d'amore to interpret violin music. Its romantic name has appealed to many violinists since then; but its own musical literature is very restricted.

His association with these three enthusiasts provided the strong incentive which started Arnold Dolmetsch on his lifelong career of musical exploration. At first his own interest centred round the honey-tongued viola d'amore, which had so fascinated him in Brussels. So he acquired a fine example by Testore, and went to the British Museum to search out some music for it. He found none; but made the startling discovery that there existed a wealth of English concerted music for Viols in from two to six parts, of which he instantly appreciated the true value. Highly elated, he went straight to Sir George Grove to open up a project for the revival of this music. Sir George (somewhat startled) asked earnestly: "Do you mean to tell me that you are prepared to give the same study to these instruments and their music as you would to their modern equivalents?" Assured that this was so, he commented: "Then you will be doing a fine work."

The gathering together of a chest of Viols was a gradual process; and these were played by himself, his wife and their daughter Hélène, supplemented by certain well-chosen pupils. The question of a suitable keyboard instrument to accompany

the viols now arose. This was a serious problem; for those, then available, were in such a state of disrepair as to be useless for this purpose. There was, for instance, a double-manual harpsichord at Broadwood's, one of whose keyboards had been boarded up so as not to confuse the player; while on the other keyboard some of the keys needed assistance from him in order to rise again after being depressed. Something had to be done quickly, for even Mr. Fuller Maitland, resourceful though he was, found himself handicapped. Arnold Dolmetsch secured a fine spinet! While he was discussing its restoration with Mr. Hipkins, of Broadwood's, this good friend suddenly turned towards him and said: "After all! you tell me that your early years were spent in a workshop. Why don't you restore it yourself?" Light dawned! He realised that, during the ten years odd that his attention had been entirely engrossed by music, he had utterly lost sight of this earlier phase of his existence. This had been, however, merely a superficial oblivion. On setting to work he found that his old skill returned to him, augmented by matured intelligence.

A double manual Kirkman Harpsichord, an Italian Virginals, a large Clavichord were added to the collection and restored to their former excellence. The experience thus gained turned his attention towards construction and four large clavichords were put in hand. The first of these was bought by Fuller Maitland, the second by Sir George Grove, for the Royal College of Music, the third by his friend Herbert Horne, who decorated it exquisitely, and the fourth he kept for his own use.

He had mounted a small workshop in his house in Dulwich, beginning in a very modest way (he told me that his first lute was restored on a kitchen table). But gradually he was enabled to provide himself with the necessary equipment.

Through Herbert Horne (artist, scholar and poet) whom he had met after giving a concert at some city institute, he was introduced to the great Pre-Raphaelite community of artists, poets and writers of *belles-lettres*. His early concerts of music for Viols were held in the Fitzroy Street Studio of MacMurdo, the architect (one of their number). Later on he conceived the bold idea of holding these concerts in his own house in Dulwich, named "Dowland" after the monarch among lutenists, John Dowland.

His plan was a success, and to this remote suburb there journeyed the denizens of Bloomsbury and Kensington. These audiences have been aptly portrayed by George Moore in his novel "Evelyn Innes," wherein Arnold Dolmetsch, then in his thirties, figures as old Mr. Innes, the wizard who conjures back to life the vanished beauties of Music's younger days.

Of all the instruments which he tackled, the lute gave him the most trouble, since its individual technique lay completely outside his previous experience. It was, however, the favoured and best loved child of his creative fancy. Not only did he make a very fine example with his own hands, but he drew from it and from others of ancient make, a quality of sound whose sweet resonance and noble amplitude of overtones exerted a subtle charm, no matter whether the composition were of transparent simplicity or high intricacy.

Feeling distrustful of his own command of the English language, he was at first content to illustrate the musical lectures of such eminent scholars as Sir Frederick Bridge (then Dr. Bridge) and Dr. W. H. Cummings. This retrospective aspect of the art of music being at that time an unfamiliar one, the lecturers usually sought a little preliminary coaching from their illustrator. Despite this precaution, odd mistakes sometimes occurred, as when Dr. Bridge, carried away by his own eloquence, reached round blindly, and, snatching up a typical viola d'amore (with humped back and "flaming sword" sound holes), observed, "The viols, as you can see, have flat backs and C-shaped sound holes." Dr. Cummings, having one day been primed with the story of John Cooper, the English violist and composer, who, after a sojourn in Italy returned to England as *Giovanni Coperario*, unfortunately crippled his story by making the hero of it *Alfonso Ferrabosco*. As he approached the climax, a look of consternation swept across his face, to be followed by one of relief, as he triumphantly concluded, "Whereas you see, his real name was—er—was Ironwood!"

One day Herbert Horne said to Arnold Dolmetsch, "Why don't you deliver your own lectures? Never mind your English! They'll understand you all right." He took his friend's advice. Henceforth he ceased to depend upon others and, discarding the shackles of orthodoxy, was free to expand his own revolutionary ideas and discoveries.



THE SPIRIT OF BACH  
FROM FORKEL'S BIOGRAPHY OF BACH  
(TRANSLATED BY MR. STEPHENSON AND PUBLISHED IN 1820)

THE artist who endeavours to make his works so as to suit some particular class of amateurs either has no genius, or abuses it. To follow the prevailing taste of the multitude needs, at the most, some dexterity in a very partial manner of treating tones. Artists of this description may be compared to the artisan who must also make his goods so that his customers can make use of them. Bach never submitted to such conditions. He thought the artist could form the public, but that the public could not form the artist. When he was asked by someone, as frequently happened, for a very easy clavier piece, he used to say, "I will see what I can do." In such cases, he usually chose an easy theme, but, in thoroughly working it out, always found so much of importance to say upon it that the piece could not turn out easy after all. If complaints were made that it was still too difficult, he smiled, and said, "Only practice it diligently, it will go very well; you have five just as healthy fingers on each hand as I." Was this caprice? No, it was the real spirit of the art.

This true spirit is what led him to the great and sublime as the highest object of the art. We owe it to this spirit that Bach's works do not merely please and delight, like what is merely agreeable in art, but irresistibly carry us away with them; that they do not merely surprise us for a moment, but produce effects that become stronger the oftener we hear the works, and the better we become acquainted with them; that the boundless treasure of ideas heaped up in them, even when we have a thousand times considered them, still leaves us something new, which excites our admiration, and often our astonishment; lastly, that even he who is no connoisseur, who knows no more than the musical alphabet, can hardly refrain from admiration when they are well played to him and when he opens his ear and heart to them without prejudice.

THE KIDSON COLLECTION

BY

HENRY GEORGE FARMER

"In books lies the soul of the whole past."—*Carlyle*.

HOWEVER much we may occasionally dissent from the views of the vexatious "Sage of Chelsea," one must be in partial agreement with the utterance which I have used as a clef to my stave.



Indeed, this is especially true of *music* books. To quote Carlyle again: "Go deep enough, there is music everywhere" and never more so than in the music of the folk, where those who can delve "deep enough" will find the whole gamut of the spiritual history of man.

I have endeavoured more than once to demonstrate that whilst *art music* is the cult of the individual soul, *folk music* is the outcome of the communal spirit. It is thus that we first see the latter in its primitive utterance, where the unseen is propitiated by its charm (*carmen*). We espy it again when, under rationalisation, a disciplined toil-music was found to be rhythmically efficacious, as Pausanias has shown us. It later becomes manifest as a social persuader in recreative-music, which sprang ready-dressed, as it were, from the preceding. All of these facets of folk-music of the past were expressions of the communal effort which existed before art-music was born. The real story of folk-music has yet to be written. Meanwhile, this turning back to the cradle, to the childhood, to the youth of the music of mankind—survivals of which still exist—has attracted many to the study of folk-song and its cousin german, folk-dance.

During the past fifty years of interest in folk-dance and folk-song, many have contributed to our store of knowledge as recorders, collectors, or researchers in this attractive field. Some are allured because of the belief that the "sweetest melodies are those that by distance are made more sweet," as Wordsworth sang. Others are persuaded since the measured melody makes such an excellent recreative pastime. Quite apart from these are the ethnographer and historian, who endeavour, respectively, to fit the practice of such music into the habits of the people, and to trace the pedigree of this music back to Adamite days. Of all those enthusiasts perhaps the best equipped in our time was Frank Kidson (1855-1926) of Leeds, who was a recorder, collector and researcher. Yet, although better known for his writings and his monumental collection, he was also one of that glorious fellowship who, to parody a line of Pope:

".....to book collecting repair,  
Not for the titles, but the music there."

Kidson was not a professional musician, but he was the recognised authority on his subject. His writings, sometimes in co-operation with others, fully confirm the justness of this

appraisement, notably his *Old English Country Dances* (1890), *Traditional Tunes* (1891), *English Folk-Song* (1900), *British Music Publishers* (1900), *English Folk-Song and Dance* (1915), *The Beggars' Opera, its Predecessors and Successors* (1922), as well as his valuable contributions to *Grove's Dictionary of Music* (1904, 1927), to say nothing of numerous articles elsewhere. Like all genuine collectors and glossators, his interest never abated, for although he published frequently the results of his gleanings, he was always on the look-out for fresh items to fill gaps in his collection, and by these later acquisitions of knowledge, was never averse to public rectification or cancellation of previous opinions. Some of the catalogues of sales which he attended are still preserved—those of the eclectic Sotheby, Quaritch, Puttick and Simpson—in which we detect such marginalia as “Leeds,” or some other such ticking-off which registered his purchase or interest. It was by this means, probably, that much of his library was amassed, although a quantity of imperfect or poorly clad copies possibly reveal that he had diligently delved into many a plebeian bookstall.

At Kidson's death, the greater part—perhaps some two-thirds—of his library went to Glasgow, a city which is extremely fortunate to possess so interesting a collection of the “music of the people,” a circumstance which is bound to make the Music Room of the Mitchell Library, Glasgow—which houses the Kidson Collection—a Mecca for research workers into the “hallowed quiet of the past.” I say fortunate because, when these treasures came to Glasgow, the *Yorkshire Evening Post* (19th June, 1939) wondered “why this wonderful collection was allowed to leave Leeds.” The answer is simple enough. Late in life Kidson, who was proud of being a Yorkshireman, offered his collection to his native city, when it was politely declined. After his death in 1926 his niece, the late Miss Ethel Kidson, once more approached Leeds in this matter, and again the authorities “could not see their way to acquire the collection.” It was in this wise that Glasgow stepped into the breach and purchased the Kidson Collection for £500. So rough and casual was the assessment of its contents at the time that its extent was placed at two to three thousand volumes. Today the card index reveals four thousand separate volumes, the collection being officially described as being:

"Rich in folk songs and folk dances of Great Britain and Ireland, early English ballad operas—original and early editions—and popular music of the 18th century."<sup>(1)</sup>

Although this description reveals that the collection is of fairly wide scope, it is not sufficiently explicit to indicate precise dimensions. When I first examined the collection some years ago I found serious deficiencies. Some of these were due, according to the librarian of that date, to the fact that the whole Kidson library did not go to Glasgow in 1929, but that one-third, possibly, had been sold or otherwise dispersed earlier, including some scarce or rare items. When I re-examined the collection in 1947-48, at the suggestion of the English Folk Dance and Song Society,<sup>(2)</sup> I was struck by the number of manuscripts, alluded to in Kidson's own handwritten *Index of Airs*, which were missing. In an attempt to run these to earth I turned to other libraries which might have acquired them. I was only able to trace one of these missing manuscripts—the Cuming MS (1723)—which had been acquired, with one or two other items, by the National Library of Scotland. I then turned to the late Miss Ethel Kidson, thinking that she might be able to throw some light on the whereabouts of these strayed manuscripts, but at first I only drew a blank. So far as she knew, everything had gone to Glasgow that made the collection complete. On my writing her later, asking for information on another point, she replied saying that she would do so later, as she was then not well enough to go through a *pile of books* that was necessary. It was this that led me to suggest that a friend of mine at Leeds would be only too pleased to give any assistance that was within his power in handling these books. I had no reply to this, but a few weeks later a large parcel arrived at my house which contained a quantity of manuscripts, and a week later a further parcel arrived. In all there were fifty-two manuscript volumes which, on careful examination, turned out to be, for the most part, the missing manuscripts from the Kidson Collection. I consulted Mr. A. B. Patterson, the City Librarian, Glasgow, who was delighted to acquire them from Miss Kidson in August, 1948.

As I have already stressed, this collection is primarily concerned with folk and popular music. In this respect it may

(1) L. R. McColvin and Harold Reeves, *Music Libraries* (London, 1938), ii, 248.

(2) *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, Dec., 1948, v, pp. 132-3.

be noted that Playford's *Dancing Master* is to be found here in nine issues, from that of 1665 (music only), in the holograph of Kidson himself, to the last edition of 1728. It is a work that may be justly called the source-book of the British folk-dance, both in music and figures. I say British rather than English, because Scotland may have some slight claim in these books. This latter reminds one that Walsh's *Caledonian Country Dances* (ca. 1730) is in the Kidson Collection in four books, in one of which we see for the first time "Charlie is my darling" as "The Chocolate Pot." Aird's *Selection of Scotch, English, Irish and Foreign Airs* (Glasgow, ca. 1778 et seq.), in six books, is also found on its shelves, although some are Goulding's issues. Kidson himself admits that they contain "much curious matter." One curiosity, it will be remembered, is that "Yankee Doodle" first appeared in these pages, as Kidson discovered, a fact acknowledged by O. G. T. Sonneck, the official historian of America's national melodies. Aird's *Selection* is also a precious mine of regimental marches, most of which are quite unknown nowadays, and one would like to see the War Office reviving some of these old martial strains in their appropriate settings. Of course, quite one-third of the British Army still march past to regimental marches based on British folk-music.

Dozens of books of country dances crowd the shelves of the Kidson Collection—the treasured issues of Johnson, Walsh, Rutherford, Thompson, Cahusac, Skillern, Waylett, and others. Song books exist there in profusion, whilst the *corpus* of sheet music songs runs into one hundred and four volumes. Especially curious to the inquisitive are ten volumes of broadsides because, as Kidson tells us in his *English Folk-song and Dance* (1915), "when the folk-song singer did not get his song by oral transmission he took it from a ballad sheet." This fact had already been observed by the angling Walton in 1653 and had caught the eye of the limning Hogarth in 1747. In a note on the fly-leaf of the first volume of these ballads Kidson writes: "Bought from the daughter of Richard Barr, the ballad (=broadside) printer of Leeds, who was at 14, Marsh Lane, Leeds, June, 1845." Shakespeare may have been wroth at those "same metre ballad-mongers," but he would have enjoyed those naïve and crude woodcuts which grace or disgrace 18th and early 19th century broadsides. One other fascinating line in which Kidson specialised was that of early tutors. Quite apart from their value as guides to the technique of instrumental proficiency

a century or two ago, many an old folk-tune has been preserved in their pages.

Equally valuable is the apparatus by which Kidson controlled the otherwise unfathomable depths of his collection. Firstly, there are his own handwritten catalogues—*Catalogues of Books* (2 vols.), *Catalogue of Tutors . . .*, *Catalogues of Operas* (most useful for English opera), *Catalogue of Ballad Collections* and a *Bibliography of Ballad Collections*. Secondly, there are the precious indices, one of which is an *Index of Irish and Welsh Collections*. Yet his *magnum opus* is the complete *Index of Airs* in 57 volumes, with whose home-bound covers are to be found the *fons et origo* of the airs of the British people for the past 250 years. It is a veritable mine of information to the researcher and worthy of being in print, although the editing of such a book would not be easy. In these Indices are to be found thousands upon thousands of titles of airs, handwritten on slips pasted in these 57 volumes, from which one ought to be able to see at a glance where the items sought are to be found. It was simple for Kidson himself to run an air to earth by this means, but it has not been so easy for others, as many a researcher has found to his sorrow, since Kidson's "hand," industrious and kindly as it certainly was, has the tantalising feature of frequently being illegible.

Nowadays, most collectors and researchers in old music are armed with W. Barclay Squire's *Catalogue of Printed Music . . in the British Museum* (2 vols., 1912) which stops at 1800, although before the emergence of this work we had Kidson's invaluable *British Music Publishers* (1900) which also gave us detailed information of printers and engravers. An early interleaved copy of this book, in Kidson's handwriting, containing many additions, is also to be found in the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, but it is just as well to point out that in Glasgow University Library there exists Kidson's final revision of this work in two quarto manuscript volumes which was acquired in 1948, at my suggestion, from the late Miss Kidson. It is now half-a-century since *British Music Publishers* was issued, and with all the knowledge which has accrued since then, plus what is contained in Kidson's own additions and rectifications in print and in manuscript, it is surely high time that a second edition of this important work were undertaken by some enthusiastic editor and enterprising publisher.

## ON PLAYING THE RECORDER

BY

CARL F. DOLMETSCH

I am going to avoid the well-worn paths of antiquarian interest in the recorder, and even try to forget such famous early exponents as Henry VIII, Hamlet and Samuel Pepys, in order that we may give our undivided attention to the recorder as it concerns you and me today. Arnold Dolmetsch produced the first modern recorders in 1920, and to him the world owes the fact that there are many more people who play the instrument nowadays than at any other time in its history. There must be very practical reasons for this: the recorder is the least costly and most portable of all serious musical instruments; it also combines the double advantage of giving immediate reward to the beginner as well as providing scope for the more brilliant and ambitious student to attain virtuoso standard, as it will respond to all demands made upon it.

The recorder can be learnt without lessons, but there is danger in this, and some initial help from an experienced teacher will do much to enable a beginner to go on working by himself without fear of acquiring bad habits early on. Simple instruction books are generally sold with new recorders. In addition to elementary hints and tunes, they include a chart or tablature of exact fingerings for the entire chromatic range of the instrument, a system so simple that a child can understand it.

Here are a few hints which should be strictly observed by both pupil and teacher, to spare them unnecessary disappointment through acquiring faults which are difficult to unlearn.

Do not try immediately to cover all the holes with both hands. Begin with the left hand only; there are quite a number of good tunes on five notes, ranging from tonic to dominant. When a few of these have been mastered, gradually bring the fingers of the right hand into use as you increase your range.

Use the pads and not the tips of the fingers; this will help beginners to overcome one of their initial difficulties in covering the holes. Any leakage of air from badly stopped holes prevents the notes from sounding properly. This trouble vanishes when increasing sensitivity of the fingers enables the beginner to feel the holes.

Do not overblow; after very little practice one feels instinctively the exact pressure required to obtain correct pitch and quality of tone.

Tongue the notes by softly uttering the sound T or D. Every note should be articulated in this way unless it is slurred to the preceding note. Condensation caused by warm breath in a cold instrument may block the windway and stifle the sound. The remedy is simple: just place a finger over the window and clear the windway by blowing sharply through it. Also warm the instrument gently by holding it in the hands before starting to play.

The average learner expects quick results, so his enthusiasm should not be damped at the outset with a mass of theory; after all, a child learns to speak first and studies grammar afterwards. A recorder pupil will enjoy theoretical work once his interest is aroused and he begins to discover what his instrument can do.

Recorder tone is produced on the same principle as in organ pipes and is therefore pure and carries well. A beginner is pleasantly surprised to discover that it is possible to produce a note immediately by just blowing. This is convenient but deceptively dangerous! You can produce a note by just striking a piano key, but that does not make you a performer. An expert recorder player controls his tone with an infinite variety of nuances, articulations, expressions and contrasts in volume.

Although a good instrument is in tune provided the correct fingering and breath control are employed, subtle adjustments calling for a keen ear are as necessary to the player as to a violinist, who makes fine adjustments after his fingers are correctly placed. Real mastery of his instrument will give a player as much control over recorder tone as a singer has of a well-trained voice, and let me add, with emphasis, that learning how and where to breathe is another responsibility shared alike by singers and all players of wind instruments.

A beginner should be content to play in easy keys at first, but as the recorder is chromatically complete over a range of nearly two and a half octaves, it can be played in any key. I must emphasise that it is because a good recorder has a scientifically designed, intricate and irregular conical bore of mathematical accuracy, that key mechanisms are entirely unnecessary.



It is these resources which place the recorder in the front rank as a recital instrument. Modern composers have been quick to appreciate its possibilities and are providing our "English Flute" (to give its other name) with a future in addition to its distinguished past. These modern compositions show that the tone of the recorder blends successfully with that of the piano, though harpsichord tone is more appropriate for performing early music.

To return to the recorder's place in the home, I will briefly consider consort playing. This term implies several instruments playing together "in consort." As with "a chest of viols," there is a complete family of recorders, from the large bass to the little sopranino which is only nine inches long. This baby of the family will suit the hands of a child of four, but grown-ups can play it provided their finger tips are not too large for the spacing of the holes which are very close to one another. Handel called it *flauto piccolo* and gave it obligato parts in *Acis and Galatea*. Its lowest note is F on the top line of the treble clef, but its mellowness makes it sound considerably lower than its actual pitch.

The descant comes next in size. Its fundamental note is C above the middle C.

The treble or alto in F, a fourth below the descant, is by tradition and practice the most important member of the family, with the greatest literature. Whenever "flauto" or "flute" is met with in 18th century scores (not "flauto traverso" or simply "traverso"), the recorder is meant.

Richness and warmth of expression are the characteristics of the tenor recorder, whose lowest note is middle C, one octave below the descant.

One is inclined to regard the bass recorder as suitable only for playing in consorts, but it is no more true of this instrument than it is of the cello. This large recorder, nearly four feet long, goes down to F, one fifth below the tenor. Larger basses did exist in the past, but these have not yet been reinstated in modern consorts.

Recorder consort playing in its most elementary form differs from the average string ensemble only in that players of very limited technique can at once start playing together to their



mutual pleasure and benefit, though, be it noted, the pleasure at this stage applies more to the players themselves than to their listeners! In its highest form, it is the equivalent of the best string quartet playing, demanding the same fine musicianship, an ear constantly alert, and an unselfish, intuitive understanding, born of much practice together.

I shall hope on another occasion to give a brief outline of the music specifically written for the recorder by the greatest masters, both in various ensembles including orchestral scores and as a solo instrument. I shall also give a few hints regarding the music for which the instruments were not specified, but which is entirely suitable for performance on recorders. In many cases, it was traditionally so performed. The field is almost limitless.

## FLORID ORNAMENTATION

BY

MARC PINCHERLE

*(translated and adapted by Dorothy Swainson)*

It is common knowledge that in music composed before about 1800, there was a considerable divergence between the written text as originally published and the way it was played during the composer's lifetime. To-day, although most performers are inclined to underestimate this disparity, differences in *tempo*, accentuation, dynamics, and phrasing are generally more or less taken into account. But all these are really far less important than the improvised ornamentation by means of which solo performers displayed their musicianship. It is difficult to exaggerate the æsthetic value that was attached to this floral ornamentation by 18th century violinists including Viotti and his disciples. For us to-day, the problem of "how to embellish an *Adagio*" bristles with difficulties which no one in recent years can claim to have solved in all its aspects (\*).

We will examine here one particular case, that of Corelli's Opus V. It is one of the most significant, not only on account of the large number of examples of this type of ornamentation

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(\*) The author, at the time of writing, was unacquainted with Arnold Dolmetsch's work in this sphere.—(ED.)

it contains, but because of their very high musical quality. The work was published in Rome in the year 1700 and it created a greater sensation than any other instrumental pieces had done. It became the talk of the day and in superficial society circles people were heard gossiping about this new *Opera Quinta* as though it were a new stage opera. It is the only collection of Sonatas for solo violin with accompaniment of figured bass that were published by Corelli himself. It is in two parts. The various movements of the six Sonatas in Part I are marked *Allegro, Andante, Adagio, Grave*, etc. The original title of Part II is: *Preludii allemande correnti gighe sarabande gavotte e follia*. They are arranged as five Sonatas of an intermediary type between the chamber Sonata and the Suite of dance movements. These are followed by the celebrated *Follia*.

It must have been very soon after the publication of the original plain edition that two other editions were issued in Amsterdam, one by Pierre Mortier, and the other by Estienne Roger. These both contained rich ornamentation of the slow movements in Part I which, said the publishers, reproduced Corelli's own manner of performance. In the 19th century Fr. Chrysander was the first to reprint Mortier's edition which Augener published in 1891 in London. In his preface to this edition, Chrysander expresses his belief in the authenticity of the ornamentation. Since then, certain critics have suggested that Mortier's edition might have been published after Corelli's death and that it might be spurious. On the other hand, Roger's edition, which is identical in every respect, undoubtedly appeared during Corelli's lifetime. Curiously enough, a book published by Roger in 1716, *Histoire des Sévarambes* by Denis Vairese, contains a catalogue of his musical publications in which Corelli's Opus V is listed as follows:

Corelli Opera Quinta, Nouvelle Edition gravée . . . avec les agréments marqués pour les Adagio, comme M. Corelli veut qu'on les joue, et ceux qui seront curieux de voir l'original de M. Corelli avec ses lettres écrites à ce sujet peuvent les voir chez Estienne Roger.

The usual procedure of only printing the bare unadorned notes of slow movements, and the singularity of breaking this tradition, explains and justifies Roger's cautionary note. This catalogue of 1716 contains 411 items, of which Corelli's Opus V is number 40. It is therefore more than probable that the latter was published before 1713, the year of the composer's death.

About 1720, John Walsh did not hesitate to reprint, as genuine, the ornamented edition. In any case, whether entirely genuine or not, this florid flow of notes gives a better idea than the bare text of the first edition can do of the suavity of Corelli's own manner of performance for which he was renowned in his day. Also, the fluent and flexible *fioriture* seem better suited to the short bow then in use than very long sustained notes.

All the available 18th century instructions on ornamentation (and they are too numerous to quote here), confirm the fact that in *Adagio* movements, anything but the written text was played as a matter of course. Exceptionally, in one piece of Corelli's (Opus VI, No. 8) which he intended to be played as written, that is, without embellishment, he took the precaution of marking: *Arcate sostenute e come stà*.

Further evidence of the license allowed to and taken by 18th century interpreters is provided by a small manuscript volume in M. Alfred Cortot's library. It is bound in red morocco leather and the title, as misspelt by the binder, is: *Correlli's Solos, grac'd by Doburg*. This is none other than the once-famous English violinist Michael Dubourg (1703-1767), who was greatly esteemed by Handel, but whose name only survives to-day in many minds in connection with an oft-quoted anecdote. According to Burney, during one of the first performances of *The Messiah* in Dublin in 1742, Dubourg launched out into such an elaborate *cadenza* that when he eventually found his way back to the right key, Handel's voice was heard booming in stentorian tones: "Welcome home, Mr. Dubourg."

Dubourg was temperamentally an improviser, but his innate musicianship generally restrained him from exaggerated ornamentation such as Tartini and his disciples indulged in. The lack of precision in his notation points, however, to a certain elasticity and use of *tempo rubato* which refuses to be tethered to strict time. Dubourg evidently expected his accompanist to follow him *colla parte*. His manuscript begins with Sonate No. 5 of Corelli's Opus V and does not include Sonatas 1 to 4. We reproduce on another page, and for the first time, a facsimile of the second *Adagio* from the fifth Sonata, by courtesy of M. Alfred Cortot. The manuscript contains the whole of the Suites in Opus I, Part II, but not *La Follia*. These are extremely interesting as none of the early editions of Mortier, Roger or Walsh contain anything of the kind. As an example, we

reproduce Dubourg's treatment of the *Sarabande* from Sonata No. 7 with Corelli's plain text printed below.

We have already said that soloists are expected to improvise florid ornamentation in slow movements; but when we find Dubourg taking all sorts of liberties with Giges and Gavottes, it is somewhat surprising. For instance, in the first four bars of the *Tempo di Gavotta* in Sonata No. 9, he follows Corelli; but in bars 4 to 8, he introduces runs in triplets:—



In Sonatas Nos. 10 and 11, the ornamentation is more ornate than ever. The *Sarabande* in No. 10 is adorned with endless roulades and the *Allemande* is invaded by triplets which change its character. To the *Gavotte* in F major (quoted by Tartini in his *Arte del Arco*) Dubourg added four variations of his own. The *Allegro* of No. 11 bears only a vague resemblance to the original. The *Gigue* is more satisfactory as it provides variety without rhythmic distortion. The final *Gavotte* is decorated with interesting alternative *reprises*, introducing syncopations, breakings of chords and rhythmic changes which must have delighted his audiences.

Dubourg made no version of his own of *La Follia*. This is logical and understandable as in this work Corelli wrote everything out as he intended it should be played, even indicating the bowing and avoiding possible ambiguities by writing out arpeggios and broken chords in full instead of in the usual abbreviated form of notation. It is more than probable that the long sustained notes of variation 14 should be played without embellishment, especially as they would be far more difficult to sustain with the short bow than if they were divided up into notes of lesser time value as in the preceding variations.

This digression is not entirely irrelevant, as it draws attention to the difference between Corelli's and Dubourg's cast of mind. Corelli invariably aims at preserving a pure style; he is possibly



ENGLISH ALTO VIOL, EARLY 17TH CENTURY.

ITALIAN TENOR VIOL, CIRCA 1500 OR EARLIER.

(PART OF THE DOLMETSCH CHEST OF VIOLS).

Sarabande

The musical score is presented in three systems, each with three staves. The top staff of each system features the original plain text with Michael Dubourg's florid ornamentation written above it. The middle and bottom staves of each system contain the original plain text. The ornamentation includes various trills, mordents, and grace notes, particularly in the first and third systems.

CORELLI'S SONATA, OPUS V, NO. 7, SARABANDE.  
(THE COMPOSER'S PLAIN TEXT AND, ABOVE IT, MICHAEL  
DUBOURG'S FLORID ORNAMENTATION).

less austere than is usually supposed, if his florid ornamentation is not taken into account. He is lyrical, and, at the same time, reserved. He is always careful never to set a bad example or to profess anything which could not be taught to all and sundry. Dubourg on the other hand was a child of his time. His style was fashionable a generation after Corelli and is a foretaste of the romanticism to come. Virtuosi were by this time beginning to face larger audiences and more importance was being attached to their personal characteristics and attainments; they were prone to court individual success by becoming less discreet in their expressions of sadness or of joy and they sought to enliven their performance by speeding up the *tempo*, extending their range, and introducing pathetic accents and changes of rhythm. It can happen that all these expedients which are intended to avoid monotony may produce the opposite effect if unduly exaggerated. When Dubourg's flourishes and variants are not excessive, his inspiration is good. More than once he imparts grace and charm to passages that were in danger of becoming stereotyped formulas, and he breathes new life into *reprises* that would otherwise be tedious.

In any case, whatever opinion we may have of the æsthetic ideals he reflects, he was very famous in his day; and authentic documentation such as his is a welcome contribution to the history of ornamentation. Virtuosi were usually careful not to reveal the mysteries of their interpretation in writing and to reserve them for their own use. Dubourg's forty-four page manuscript is a clear exposition of his own individual style and it provides a more practical demonstration of "how to embellish an *Adagio*" than all the rules and instructions on the subject that may be consulted in contemporary treatises.

THE CHEST OF VIOLS  
BY  
NATHALIE DOLMETSCH

Arnold Dolmetsch used to say, proudly, that the family of viols is more complete than the modern family of violins, which lost its tenor at the close of the eighteenth century.

This statement may puzzle those who base their consort, or "chest of viols," on the writings of Thomas Mace (1676) and John Playford (1654). These writers only quote three sizes of consort viols: bass, tuned *D* to *D*; tenor, a fourth higher, *G* to *G*;

and treble, an octave above the bass, *D* to *D*. There exist, however, old English instruments of a size between the tenor and the treble, obviously intended to be strung as altos. These are frequently five-stringed instruments, in which case, as tenors without a low *G* string, they are in effect altos; though they may have been classed as tenors by Mace and Playford.

Ganassi (Venice, 1542), speaks of the alto and tenor viol as being tuned in unison. This is not so absurd as may at first appear, as a smaller instrument has a different colour of tone and is proportionately richer in its upper register than the tenor.

Jean Rousseau (1687), always meticulous in his information even to the point of redundancy, gives the following facts. Having described the bass, he says: "There have been in use for some time three other viols of different sizes: one, a little smaller than the bass, to serve as tenor, and one a little smaller than the tenor to serve as alto; and finally, one a little smaller than the alto to serve as treble. These four instruments take the parts of the four voices [in ensembles] which had been practised in Italy long ago, where the four viols were tuned thus: the tenor and alto in unison, one fifth above the bass [i.e. *A* to *A*] and the treble one fourth above the tenor and alto, that is to say, one octave above the bass [*D* to *D*]. When these four viols were used in France, the tenor was tuned a fourth above the bass [*G* to *G*], the alto a fourth above the tenor [*C* to *C*] and the treble one tone above the alto, at the octave above the bass [*D* to *D*]."

Owing to the large range of each size of viol, it is generally possible to play a consort part upon another instrument than that for which it was written. This, though convenient, is not always satisfactory, because the high register of a low instrument has a thinner quality of tone than has the middle register of a higher instrument.

The chest of viols, which is used for consorts of from two to six parts, may consist either of two trebles, two tenors and two basses, or of two trebles, one alto, one tenor and two basses. This second combination is particularly useful for consort music from about 1600 onwards, as this is usually set higher than the earlier music. For those who wish to play seven-part consorts, of which a few exist, a second tenor completes the set.







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